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PROCEEDINGS
OF
THE ROYAL IRISH ACADEMY.

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 10TH, 1851.

THOMAS ROMNEY ROBINSON, D.D., PRESIDENT,
in the Chair.

THE following antiquities were presented to the Museum of the Academy :

An ornament of annular shape, a stone celt, and a weapon made of flint, found near Ballinderry, King's County ; presented by W. F. Barton, Esq.

A stone mould for casting bronze arrow-heads ; presented by Patrick Brophy, Esq.

A bronze celt, a brass plate, and a bronze spear, found near Tullahogue ; presented by the Rev. Thomas H. Porter, D. D.

An antique wooden dish, found near Magherafelt, County Armagh ; presented by the Rev. Dr. King Irwin.

A wooden cup or methen, which bore the name and date of Dermot Tully, 1590 ; presented by William Allen, Esq.

An antique iron key, with a handle curiously wrought, and bearing traces of having been overlaid with gold, found in the vicinity of the Little Monastery, at Bonamargy, near Ballycastle, County Antrim ; presented by John Francis Waller, Esq., M. R. I. A., from Caleb Powell, Esq., Clonshaboy, County Limerick.

The Secretary read an extract from a letter of Edward J. Cooper, Esq., M. R. I. A., addressed to the Rev. Dr. Lloyd, on a Thunder-shower at Markree Castle on June 30th, 1851 :

“The forenoon of June 30th was fine, but overcast. There were a few drops of rain about noon ; atmosphere electrically charged, but not unusually so for the period of the year. At 4, P. M., very distant thunder; and the clouds showing symptoms of an approaching storm, I returned to the house from my garden. The heat at this time was considerable, yet not such as to indicate very near high electric action. At 10 minutes past 6, P. M., I first perceived a flash of lightning ; I then took my watch out to ascertain its distance. One thunder-clap was remarkably loud for the distance, which was six miles. Moving to the window, facing N. W., under which some people were playing at quoits, and perceiving that there was scarcely any wind, I told them that they need not be afraid of the storm, as the lightning was so distant ; the nearest was not within four miles. At about half-past, and in an instant of time, a strong breeze arose, followed almost immediately and as instantaneously by a most extraordinary shower of rain, with hail. In five minutes the road under the window was a sheet of water ; the quantity was so great that it penetrated through the ceilings of two stories of the house. It lasted for fifteen minutes ; and during this time there fell one and a half inch *depth* of rain !! This singular phenomenon moved in a direction nearly at right angles to the magnetic meridian, from S. W. towards N. E. A lady who was in a room with a southern aspect, saw the rain approaching, and described it as appearing like a dark sheet. After this had passed away, there was no heavy rain again until a quarter before 8. The heaviest shower previously noted here fell on the 6th of August, 1846. On this occasion the amount of rain which fell in fourteen minutes = 0.409 in. This gives at the rate of forty-two inches for one day ; but it was quite eclipsed on the 30th ult., which was at the rate of twelve feet per diem !! I think that this last shower,

may have enabled us to form some idea of the Deluge, for, had it lasted forty days and nights, the depth of water would have been 480 feet! without the breaking-up of the waters of the great deep."

The President observed that the amount of rain mentioned was very unusual. The heaviest fall that ever he himself observed in a part of Ireland almost in the same latitude as Markree, but differently circumstanced in respect of moisture, was 8-10ths of an inch in 45 minutes, when there was also a thunder-storm. The observatory of Mr. Cooper was situated in the rainiest part of Ireland, which received currents from the Atlantic, charged with moisture, and was surrounded with hills, from which a great deal of moisture descended. The annual average fall of rain at Markree, he thought, was 42 inches, while at Armagh, a distance of 70 miles eastward, it was only 23 inches. Two ranges of mountains intervening between those places accounted for the difference. But these falls of rain were insignificant in comparison with those of tropical climates. Perhaps the most remarkable on record was one mentioned in the meteorological journal which was kept at his request some years ago by an officer who was stationed at the mouth of the river Irawaddy, in the Birman Empire. The quantity noted in this record was 120 inches in one day. In tropical climates, however, the rushes of rain at certain seasons only compensated for the extreme aridity of the climates during the remaining portions of the year. There were more rainy days in Ireland than in the sister country, but a smaller quantity fell at a time in the former. In no part of Ireland had they falls of rain equal to those which occurred at Whitehaven and amongst the Cumberland mountains. There were falls of 100, and sometimes of 120 inches in the year at Whitehaven, and of 70 inches at Keswick. Detailed notices of remarkable showers of rain were useful and instructive.
